



**State of New Hampshire**  
**Department of Health and Human Services**

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RFI-2021-DEHS-01-TRANS

FOR

Transportation Options and/or Motor Vehicles for NH Citizens in Need

December 30, 2020



## **1. Overview and Purpose**

### **1.1. Overview**

- 1.1.1. This Request for Information (RFI) is published to seek innovative solutions that meet the transportation needs of individuals, who are currently participating, or have recently participated in the New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP). Transportation solutions must assist families with securing reliable and affordable transportation that will result in access to employment. The Department seeks information on how to do this locally or statewide, using innovative practices that intersect across businesses, families and human services.
- 1.1.2. The Department encourages both collaborative and individual responses to this RFI.
- 1.1.3. This RFI is issued solely for market research, planning, and informational purposes and is not to be construed as a commitment by the Department to acquire any product or service or to enter into a contractual agreement.
- 1.1.4. Any costs incurred by a party in preparing or submitting information in response to the RFI are the sole responsibility of the submitting party.

### **1.2. Purpose**

- 1.2.1. The Department intends to utilize information collected through this RFI to develop a program(s) that will provide statewide transportation options to assist families in New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP) with obtaining and maintaining employment. The Department envisions such program(s) as a partnership with an organization that collaborates with transportation providers, car dealership(s), and financial institutions.
- 1.2.2. NHEP is the mandatory work program under the Federal Administration for Children and Families Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.



- 1.2.3. The NHEP provides an array of Employment Counseling and Case Management services to single adult parents who are participating in this mandatory work program. Services include vocational training; job search activities; job readiness services; educational assistance; credentialing services; and other employment services. The intent of the program is to help upskill individuals with by focusing on eliminating the harmful effects of multi-generational poverty. The NHEP program has identified the need for creative solutions to help NHEP-TANF participants mitigate transportation barriers that otherwise obstruct NHEP participants from getting to and from educational institutions, trainings, and employment.
- 1.2.4. The NHEP mission is to strengthen individuals and families through career awareness, skill development and employment. Utilizing a whole families approach to jobs, the Department incorporated the mandatory participation requirements for TANF recipients and lack of transportation into this RFI.

## **2. Background Information**

### **2.1. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Background**

- 2.1.1. The Department of Health and Human Services' mission is to join communities and families in providing opportunities for citizens to achieve health and independence. The mission of Division of Economic and Housing Stability (DEHS) is to advance the health, economic, and social well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

### **2.2. The DEHS Current Context and Plans for the Future**

- 2.2.1. Currently the Bureau of Employment Supports / NHEP program has some transportation resources and options on which participants attempt to rely. Resources and options include public transportation systems, bus passes, mileage reimbursement, and ride sharing programs. However, many urban areas in New Hampshire do not have public transportation options available or options that align with daycare, school, and work schedules. Some NHEP participants own vehicles that are either unreliable or require repairs that they cannot afford. Consequently, many participants may not have transportation options available to meet the demands of single parents caring for children.



- 2.2.2. When surveying NHEP participants entering into the NHEP program, 30% stated that lack of transportation was the number one challenge for participating in NHEP work activities. Additionally, NHEP participants were asked what the challenges were for entering into long-term employment, with 26% identifying Transportation as the second-highest obstacle with childcare coming in at 30% and number one respectively. Consequently, the Department believes this data suggests that if a NHEP participant owns a new reliable and affordable vehicle, they will be more like to enter the labor market and obtain economic independence, which ultimately enhances the overall health and well-being of the family.
- 2.2.3. The Department recognizes that to meet family needs owning a reliable vehicle is often required. The Department also recognizes that car ownership can be one of largest expenses in a family's monthly budget. The Department's near future goal to develop a program that will allow NHEP participants to own an affordable and reliable car. In urban areas, participants experience transportation barriers that result from public transportation not aligning with daycare, school and work schedules.

### **3. Future Components and Goals**

#### **3.1. Overview**

- 3.1.1. The Department intends to use the information collected through this RFI to:
  - 3.1.1.1. Develop a sustainable system of providing safe and reliable transportation to families participating in the New Hampshire Employment Program is available statewide.
  - 3.1.1.2. Establish a collaborative approach, local or statewide, that supports responsible lending that includes affordable payments for new or gently used vehicles.
  - 3.1.1.3. Ensure TANF participants receive case management, budgeting/fiscal literacy, transportation planning and where appropriate, support to purchase a vehicle that will meet the needs of the family through non-predatory lending.
  - 3.1.1.4. Provide for access to safe, secure and reliable transportation, as needed, for employment success.
  - 3.1.1.5. Identify risks and opportunities for participants and lending institutions in the establishment of reliable transportation.



- 3.1.1.6. Receive recommendations for supports that would need to be in place to alleviate the risk of providing transportation support / services over the long term.
- 3.1.1.7. Recommendations for supports that would need to be in place to alleviate any burdens identified with the recommended car purchase model.
- 3.1.1.8. Identify supports that would need to be in place for participants who may fall behind in car payments.

## **4. Program requirements:**

### **4.1. Note to respondents**

- 4.1.1. Transportation solutions must be available statewide and the design may allow for multiple providers, where appropriate. Therefore, program boundaries or service area may be any region; collection of regions; or existing population parameters of an organization within the NHEP, which will be the referral source to the program. Referrals will be consistent with the family's needs. The Department is seeking all possible solutions.

## **5. Questions:**

### **5.1. Note to respondents**

- 5.1.1. Respondents may respond to some or all the questions below. Responses to all questions are encouraged but not required. Response can be brief (a few sentences) or longer (a few paragraphs).
- 5.1.2. Please be sure to label responses appropriately to the question being addressed.
- 5.1.3. This RFI is for informational purposes only, and is not intended to result in a contract or agreement with any respondent. This RFI does not commit the State to publish an RFP or award a contract.
- 5.1.4. The State is seeking community insight and information that may be incorporated into a future Request for Proposal (RFP). The issuance of an RFP, as a result of information gathered from responses, is solely at the discretion of the State. Should an RFP be issued, it will be open to qualified vendors, whether those vendors choose to submit a response to this RFI. This RFI is not a pre-qualification process.

### **5.2. Transportation Solutions and/or Motor Vehicles for NH Citizens in Need**

- 5.2.1. If a program exists today, please provide the website URL?



- 5.2.2. Where does or would the program operate (city, state, region, or national)?
- 5.2.3. Please provide a brief description of the mission and main activities of the program.
- 5.2.4. Why is your organization(s) considered to have the expertise needed to provide input to this RFI? Briefly describe your organization, client base, financial stability, and history. Please keep generalized marketing material to a minimum.
- 5.2.5. Does your organization have experience implementing and supporting a program as the one described in this RFI? Describe any experience/expertise specific to assisting low-income families to attain reliable transportation.
- 5.2.6. What is your organization's recommendation to the Department? Provide the rationale behind your recommendation.
- 5.2.7. Describe options that were considered, but not recommended, and explain why they are not the recommended option.
- 5.2.8. If your recommended design is to provide vehicles to TANF participants include the basic strategy and the specific tasks required to execute your recommended approach.
- 5.2.9. Provide an outline of costs to all parties associated with your recommended approach including but not limited to:
  - 5.2.9.1. Department
  - 5.2.9.2. Clients
  - 5.2.9.3. Business
  - 5.2.9.4. Financial Institutions
- 5.2.10. Provide the functional capabilities that must be in place to ensure your approach is efficient and effective.
- 5.2.11. Every project has certain inherent risks. Describe the significant risk factors associated with your recommended approach and how they should be mitigated.
- 5.2.12. Are there additional questions or concerns that are important for the Department to consider with regard to developing and implementing your recommended approach?
- 5.2.13. What lessons learned can you share to ensure the Department understands and takes appropriate precautions in advance of implementing this program?



- 5.2.14. What other suggestions or recommendations do you have to ensure the services provided are successful?
- 5.2.15. What other opportunities, challenges, issues, or factors should the Department be considering as we prepare to procure these new services?

## **6. Vendors Conference**

- 6.1. The Vendors Conference will be held on the date specified in Section 7.2, Procurement Timetable, via the digital communications platform Zoom. The conference will serve as an opportunity for Vendors to observe a presentation that will cover information presented in this RFI and provide technical assistance on the submission process. Attendees will be given an opportunity to ask questions prior to the Conference by submitting the questions in accordance to Section 5 Questions, to the Contract Specialist specified in Section 7.1.1. The conference will also allow for time to answer questions during the presentation.
- 6.2. Attendance at the Vendors Conference is not mandatory but is highly recommended. Vendors, good faith potential vendors and their representatives interested in attending the Vendors Conference must RSVP by the date identified in Section 7.2, Procurement Timetable at the following Zoom event page: <https://nh-dhhs.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJctd-6hqzovH9R1cVoO5vivrIu6lJVgx0>.
- 6.3. The Vendors Conference will not be recorded. However, the presentation materials from the meeting and an FAQ document will be posted on the Department's website on the date specified in Section 7.2, Procurement Timetable. Additionally, Oral answer given at the Vendors Conference are nonbinding.

## **7. Notices**

### **7.1. Point of Contact or Designee**

- 7.1.1. The point of contact for this RFI relative to the submission of requested information, from the RFI issue date is:  
State of New Hampshire  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Jennifer Hackett, Administrator I  
Contracts & Procurement  
Brown Building  
129 Pleasant Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
Email: Jennifer.Hackett@dhhs.nh.gov





Phone: (603) 271-9605

- 7.1.2. Other state personnel are NOT authorized to discuss this RFI before the submission deadline, other than a State-determined designee. The State will not be held responsible for oral responses to Respondents regardless of source.

## 7.2. RFI Timetable

Request for Information Timetable		
Item	Action	Date
1.	Release RFI	12/30/20
2.	Question submission period opens	12/30/20
3.	Vendors Conference (non-required)	01/13/21
4.	Question period closes	01/21/21
5.	Response to questions published	01/28/21
6.	RFI submissions due	02/11/21

*The State reserves the right to modify these dates at its sole discretion.*

## 7.3. Respondent Questions and Answers

- 7.3.1. All questions about this RFI, including but not limited to requests for clarification, additional information or any changes to the RFI should be made in writing, citing the RFI page number and part or subpart, and submitted to the Contract Specialist identified in Subsection 7.1.
- 7.3.2. The Department may consolidate or paraphrase questions for efficiency and clarity. Questions that are not understood may not be answered. Statements that are not questions may not receive a response.
- 7.3.3. Questions should be received by the deadline given in Subsection 7.2, RFI Timetable.

## 7.4. Department Answers

- 7.4.1. The Department intends to issue responses to questions by the deadline specified in Subsection 7.2, RFI Timetable. Oral answers given are non-binding. Written answers to questions submitted will be posted on online at (<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/business/rfp/index.htm>). This date may be subject to change at the Department's discretion.





#### **7.5. RFI Amendment**

- 7.5.1. The Department reserves the right to amend this RFI, as it deems appropriate prior to the submission deadline on its own initiative or in response to issues raised through Respondent questions. The amended language will be posted on the Department Internet site.

#### **7.6. Information Submissions**

- 7.6.1. Information submitted in response to this RFI must be received no later than the date specified in Subsection 7.2. RFI responses must be addressed for delivery to the Point of Contact listed in Subsection 7.1.1. Responses must be marked with RFI-2021-DEHS-01-TRANS.

#### **7.7. Property of Department**

- 7.7.1. All material property submitted and received in response to this RFI will become the property of DHHS and will not be returned to the Respondent. The Department reserves the right to use any information presented in any submission provided that its use does not violate any copyrights or other provisions of law.

#### **7.8. Public Disclosure**

- 7.8.1. Any information submitted as part of a response to this RFI may be subject to public disclosure under RSA 91-A.
- 7.8.2. Insofar as a Respondent seeks to maintain the confidentiality of its confidential commercial, financial or personnel information, the Respondent must clearly identify in writing the information it claims to be confidential and explain the reasons such information should be considered confidential. This must be done by separate letter identifying by page number and RFI section number the specific information the Respondent claims to be exempt from public disclosure pursuant to RSA 91-A:5.
- 7.8.3. Each Respondent acknowledges that the Department is subject to the Right-to-Know Law New Hampshire RSA Chapter 91-A. The Departments shall maintain the confidentiality of the identified confidential information insofar as it is consistent with applicable laws or regulations, including but not limited to New Hampshire RSA Chapter 91-A. In the event the Department receives a request for the information identified by a Respondent as confidential, the Department shall notify the Respondent and specify the date the Department intends to release the requested information. Any effort to prohibit or enjoin the release of the information shall be the Respondent's responsibility and at the Respondent's sole expense. If the Respondent fails to obtain a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction enjoining the disclosure, the Department may release the



information on the date the Department specifies in their notice to the Respondent without incurring any liability to the Respondent.

**7.9. Non-Commitment**

- 7.9.1. The Department reserves the right to, at any time, cancel this RFI and to solicit new or additional information under a new RFI process.

**7.10. Liability**

- 7.10.1. Respondents agree that in no event shall the State be either responsible for or held liable for any costs incurred by a Respondent in the preparation or submittal of or otherwise in connection with their submission.

**7.11. Request for Additional Information or Materials**

- 7.11.1. During the period from date of RFI Response submission to the date of RFP publication, if that should occur, the Department may request from any Respondent additional information or materials needed to clarify information presented as part of their submission. Such a request will be issued in writing.

**8.**

**RFI Response Submission Outline and Requirements**

**8.1. Presentation and Identification**

**8.1.1. Overview**

- 8.1.1.1. Respondents are asked to examine all documentation and other requirements.
- 8.1.1.2. The Department requests that submissions conform to all instructions, conditions and requirements included in the RFI.
- 8.1.1.3. Submissions should be received by the date and time specified in the RFI Timetable, Subsection 7.2. Submissions must be emailed to the Procurement Coordinator at the following email addresses:
- 8.1.1.3.1. To: [DHHS-contracts@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:DHHS-contracts@dhhs.nh.gov)
- 8.1.1.3.2. Cc'd: [Jennifer.Hackett@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Hackett@dhhs.nh.gov)
- 8.1.1.4. The subject line must include the following information: RFO-202-DEHS-01-TRANS (email xx of xx).
- 8.1.1.5. The maximum size of file attachments per email is 10 MB. Proposals with file attachments exceeding 10 MB must be submitted via multiple emails.



## 8.2. Outline and Detail

- 8.2.1. **The Transmittal Cover Letter** – The Respondent shall submit a Transmittal Cover Letter in the following manner:
  - 8.2.1.1. On the Respondent's organization's letterhead;
  - 8.2.1.2. Identify the name, title, telephone number, and e-mail address of the person who will serve as the Respondent's representative for all matters relating to the RFI;
- 8.2.2. **Table of Contents** - The required elements of the Submission must be numbered sequentially and represented in the Table of Contents.